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UNCLAS AMMAN 002696

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STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON MIDDLE EAST AND SUICIDE
BOMBINGS

Summary

-- The lead story in the Jordanian media today, May 28, focuses on the Moroccan King's visit to Jordan and his talks with King Abdullah about regional developments. Another lead story highlights the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv yesterday and Israel's "reoccupation" of some Palestinian cities.

Editorial Commentary

-- "Martyrdom operations are within the context"

Chief Editor Taher Udwan writes on the back page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (05/28): "In the beginning of the Intifada and when Israeli occupation forces would enter the Palestinian areas known as zone A, we would hear protests all the way from Europe to the United States, forcing Israel to pull its forces. This happened because the world then believed that these Israeli invasions would destroy the peace process. We no longer hear these protests. The reality is Zone A does not exist in practice, and, simply, neither does the Palestinian sovereignty on the ground. The clock has really turned back. The victims are the peace process and the Oslo accord. And while the Palestinians argue about 'reform' and 'elections', Sharon's occupation becomes a reality covered up by the United States and met with international silence. Sharon's thugs defend their continuous invasions and mass arrests in the West Bank as actions to stop 'terrorist' operations. Yet, these operations are within the context. They are a humble response to an occupation that is determined to impose its hegemony on a besieged people."

-- "Division about martyrdom operations"

Daily columnist Jamil Nimri writes on the back page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (05/28): "In principle, these operations cannot be considered a routine aspect of a liberation movement. A suicide bombing in a facility for young men, women and children will only be viewed as a brutal action, and thus cannot be supported or justified before the world. However, in some instances they can be explained and in turn push for a balanced international pressure to put an end to the causes and circumstances. When Sharon is determined to use his military power to crush the Palestinian people and destroy them, that crushed and unarmed party has no other choice to respond to this brutality except by similar brutality. The suicide bombings represent a sensitive and serious issue. They must be made to be linked, in the eyes of public opinion, with the idea of a response to Israeli brutality."

GNEHM